

## Acceptance of the 1999 Jean Hamburger Award

ROBERT H. HEPTINSTALL



Fig. 1. Robert H. Heptinstall.

I am honored to be the co-recipient of the Jean Hamburger award.

My good friend of 36 years, Dr. Gary Hill, has with considerable poetic license given the outlines of my adult life, and all that remains for me is to embroider on his tapestry and pay tribute to those who have helped me over the years.

London in the late 1940s and 1950s was a wonderful place to be for someone starting out in hypertension and the kidney. St. Mary's was particularly well blessed, with George Pickering in hypertension and Marc Jokes ("Joe" to his friends) in renal disease. From these two I developed an abiding interest in their respective specialties, and this was reinforced by exposure to Harry Goldblatt, Arnold Rich, and Fred Germuth during two temporary stays in the United States. I also developed an attachment to atherosclerosis at this time, stemming

from some experimental studies done with Brian Bronte-Stewart, a South African fellow of Pickering's. In these we showed that hypertension could accentuate the development and progression of atherosclerosis, something that is generally accepted nowadays, but which was far from clear at that time. It is tragic to recall that such a superb investigator and dear friend as Bronte should have died in his early thirties.

Looking back over these years, it is fascinating to call to mind the meetings of the Renal Association that were held at CIBA House some half dozen times a year. Attendance at these meetings instantly dispelled the notion that the British are a polite and gentle race. Not only were the presenters of papers likely to be abused verbally, as "Joe" and I were by Clifford Wilson when we first put forward the concept of focal forms of glomerulonephritis, but physically as well, such as when Robert McCance of Cambridge quite literally threw me off the platform for exceeding my time. American meetings in comparison are more like gatherings of the church vestry!

Since coming to the United States permanently in 1960 I have been treated with the utmost kindness, and have been helped considerably by many wonderful friends, unfortunately too numerous to mention individually. My first fellow at Johns Hopkins, and someone for whom I have a special affection and regard, was my introducer, Dr. Gary Hill. He has mentioned some of the other young people who worked with me over the years, and I should like to record how much I enjoyed the relationship and how grateful I am for their efforts. Tom Pearson should be added to this list, for it was largely through him that a return to atherosclerosis was made to explore the so-called monoclonal theory of its genesis, an idea proposed by the late Earl Benditt from Seattle.

Finally, I should like to pay tribute to my long-suffering wife, Ann, who for the past 49 years has supported me in a most selfless way. Without her it would have been impossible to have achieved anything.



**Fig. 2. Autopsy room in the early 1970s.** Heptinstall is in a virtual tug of war with Sharon Weiss, who has become one of the country's experts in soft tissue tumors. Gary Hill, on the left, was chief resident at the time.